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THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" These people are already in charge of the dental sections. Their terms expire in January 1956 and July 1957, respectively. I may say that these Honorary Aissitant Medical Officers are both Medical Officers and they have considerable experience in dental work."

SRI K. VINAYAKAM :—" Is it a fact that one Dr. Chandrahasan, M.B.B.S., Dental Surgeon, possessing better qualification than the persons who have been employed by the Government applied for this job and his claims were overlooked? "

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" I have said that they are already in charge of the dental sections and their terms are due to expire some time later."

MR. SPEAKER :—" We shall now take up the short notice question."

School fee exemption certificates

* 4 *Q.*—DR. K. B. MENON : Will the Hon. the Minister for Finance be pleased to state with reference to the Government order authorising Members of the Legislative Assembly to sign school fee exemption certificates, whether the Member's signature is to be certified in turn by the Legislature Secretariat? "

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" No, Sir, the hon. Member's signature need not be certified by the Legislature Secretariat."

DR. K. B. MENON :—" The circular issued by the department to the schools is not very clear and it is understood that the signatures have to be certified by the Legislature Secretariat. On inquiry, I understand that the Members are required to have a stamp as 'Member of the Legislative Assembly'. Is that necessary. May I also know whether the Members are permitted to sign for the whole district or only for their constituency? "

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" This circular was issued in a hurry because certain irregularities were brought to the notice of the Government that the village officers were taking advantage of this and that in certain areas they were demanding money also for issuing the certificates. So, the Government wanted to rectify the defect immediately. That was why they wanted to authorize all the elected representatives of the people to issue these certificates. No doubt, it has not been made clear how the signature of any particular Member should be authenticated. But this is a matter of detail. The only thing is that the authorities should be satisfied that it is the signature of an M.L.A. and that it is not a bogus signature. The institution will have to satisfy itself to that extent. I am sure that that much of safeguard at least is necessary. As far as the issue of certificates is concerned, no restriction has been placed in respect of the M.L.As. with regard to the area. With regard to the

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Members of district boards, it is restricted to the district. As far as the municipal councillors are concerned, it is restricted to the municipal area to which they belong."

SRI K. KUNHI MOHAMED SHAFEE :—" Some of the Principals of Colleges and most of the Headmasters of high schools insist upon the certificates already signed by the M.L.As. being countersigned by a Tahsildar. In the case of certificates relating to the Central Education Ministry, the seal of the attesting authority has to be affixed to the certificates. There is a clause in the relevant rules saying that unless the seal is affixed by the attesting authority, the certificate will not be accepted by the concerned authorities. Considering the difficulties felt by the applicants, will the Government see that the Headmasters of high schools and the Principals of Colleges in the State are asked not to insist upon the certificates being countersigned by Tahsildars or any other Revenue officers? Also will the Government take up the matter with the Central Government to see that no seal need be affixed to the certificates issued by the M.L.As. or will the Government supply the M.L.A. of the State with a recognized seal? "

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" I am afraid that the question was too long for me to follow. But as far as the prescribed form is concerned, I am informed that the form has been changed now and there is no necessity for the seal to be affixed."

SRI K. VINAYAKAM :—" The position is this. The heads of institutions insist upon a seal being affixed, whereas the Members of the Legislature as well as the members of the Corporation or district boards are empowered to sign the form. If a Member of the Legislature signs his name and writes underneath it that he is a Member of the Legislative Assembly, the heads of institutions do not recognize that kind of writing. They insist upon a lifeless rubber stamp which states 'Member of the Legislature'. They do not give credence to the writing by the Member but insist upon a dumb, lifeless thing like the rubber stamp. Will the Hon. Minister issue instructions to the heads of institutions not to insist upon a useless rubber stamp? "

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" Evidently the hon. Member is referring to the seal of the office. Naturally, the head of the institution feels that there should be a seal so that he may be satisfied that it is the signature of a particular officer. But all this is being looked into by the Government. As I have already pointed out, this circular was issued in a hurry in order to meet the immediate difficulties. The entire matter is under the consideration of the Government and for the next academic year, very detailed instructions will be issued so that all these difficulties may be avoided."